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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

JANUARY 19, 1863.

Read twice, referred to the select committee on emancipation, and ordered to  
be printed.

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Mr. ELIOT, on leave, introduced the following bill :

**A BILL**

To establish a Bureau of Emancipation.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*  
3       That an office is hereby created in the War Department to  
4       be called the Bureau of Emancipation, and the President of  
5       the United States is hereby authorized to nominate, and, with  
6       the advice and consent of the Senate, to appoint, a Commis-  
7       sioner of Emancipation, with an annual salary of four thousand  
8       dollars, to whom shall be referred the adjustment and determi-  
9       nation, under the direction of the Secretary of War, of all ques-  
10      tions arising under this act or under any laws now existing or  
11      hereafter to be enacted, touching the general superintendence,  
12      disposition, and direction of all persons, being freedmen of  
13      African descent, who are or shall become free by virtue of  
14      any proclamation, law, or military order issued, enacted, or

15 promulgated during the present rebellion, or by virtue of any  
 16 act of emancipation which shall be enacted by any State for  
 17 the freedom of persons held to service or labor within such  
 18 State. And the said Commissioner shall have authority to  
 19 appoint, under the direction of the Secretary of War, such  
 20 number of clerks, not exceeding                      of each class, as shall  
 21 be necessary for the proper transaction of the business of said  
 22 bureau.

1            SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That it shall be the  
 2 duty of all military and civil officers charged with the exe-  
 3 cution of any law of the United States, or of any military  
 4 order, by virtue of which any persons of African descent,  
 5 who shall have been theretofore held as slaves within the  
 6 United States, shall be discharged from service or labor, to  
 7 make return of all their proceedings in execution thereof to  
 8 said Commissioner, under such regulations and in such form  
 9 as shall be from time to time prescribed by the Secretary of  
 10 War.

1            SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted,* That said Commis-  
 2 sioner shall, under the direction of the Secretary of War, be  
 3 charged with the execution of all laws providing for the colo-  
 4 nization of freedmen, and also with the delivery of any  
 5 bonds of the United States to any State which shall become  
 6 entitled thereto by reason of the emancipation of slaves

7 within such State, and of any act of Congress authorizing  
8 the issue of such bonds, in compensation therefor.

1       SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted*, That the said Com-  
2 missioner shall, under the direction of the Secretary of War,  
3 establish suitable and proper regulations from time to time,  
4 and cause the same to be enforced, for the needful, economical,  
5 and judicious treatment and disposition of all persons named  
6 in the first section of this act, to the end that said freedmen  
7 and the government of the United States shall be mutually  
8 protected, and their respective rights and interests duly deter-  
9 mined and maintained. And said Commissioner shall, before  
10 the commencement of each session of Congress, make full  
11 report of all acts done in his department to the Secretary of  
12 War, who is hereby directed to communicate the same to the  
13 Congress of the United States.

1       SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted*, That the report re-  
2 quired to be made to the Secretary of the Treasury by the  
3 fourth section of an act entitled "An act for the release of  
4 certain persons held to service or labor in the District of  
5 Columbia," approved on the sixteenth of April, in the year  
6 one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, shall be made to  
7 the Commissioner of Emancipation, who shall thereupon make  
8 his certificate to the Secretary of the Treasury; and the Sec-  
9 retary of the Treasury shall thereupon cause all amounts duly  
10 apportioned to be paid to the parties found by the said report

11 to be thereto entitled. And all records, proofs, and papers of  
12 the commissioners appointed under said act shall be delivered  
13 to the Commissioner of Emancipation, when the duties of the  
14 commissioners under said act shall have been fully per-  
15 formed.

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